

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ATHENS 6654

STADIS//////////

EXDIS

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY VEST FROM KUBISCH

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDIP, GR, US
SUBJECT: GREEK GOVERNMENT REQUEST THAT AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE
SCHAUFLE'S APPOINTMENT BE WITHDRAWN: JULY 18 DISCUSSION WITH
CARAMANLIS

REF: A) ATHENS 6608, B) STATE 166532

QM FOREIGN MINISTER BITSIOS EVIDENTLY TOLD PRIME MINISTER
CARAMANLIS OF OUR LONG AND VERY VIGOROUS DISCUSSION YESTERDAY
(REF A) AND CARAMANLIS, TO WHOM I HAD ALREADY SAID GOOD-BYE
EARLIER, GOT IN TOUCH WITH ME THIS MORNING TO SUGGEST THAT HE
AND I HAVE ANOTHER PRIVATE TALK BEFORE MY DEPARTURE TOMORROW
MORNING. I AGREED AND WENT TO HIS OFFICE AT MID-DAY TODAY.

2. CARAMANLIS BEGAN BY SAYING THAT HE WANTED ME TO HEAR
PERSONALLY AND FROM HIS OWN LIPS WHY HE AND HIS GOVERNMENT
HAD REACHED THE DECISION ABOUT AMBASSADOR SCHAUFLE THAT HAD BEEN
CONVEY ED TO ASSISTANT SECRETARY VEST IN WASHINGTON ON SATURDAY.
HE ASKED THAT ON MY RETURN TO WASHINGTON I EXPLAIN FULLY AND
CAREFULLY TO U.S. OFFICIALS WHAT THE SITUATION WAS HERE, WHAT
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CARAMANLIS HIMSELF WAS TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH, AND WHY THE DECISION
NOT TO HAVE SCHAUFLE COME AS AMBASSADOR TO GREECE WAS SO
OBVIOUSLY THE RIGHT ONE. HE AND I AND MANY OTHERS HAD WORKED
HARD, HE SAID, AND SUCCEEDED IN CALMING THE INTENSE ANTI-U.S.
FEELINGS IN GREECE OF SEVERAL YEARS AGO AND IN REGISTERING
SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS IN DEALING WITH A WHOLE RANGE OF IMPORTANT
ISSUES. THE PSYCHOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL CLIMATE IN GREECE

HAD IMPROVED TO THE POINT WHERE HIS GOVERNMENT WAS NOW ABLE TO PROCEED TO NORMALIZE ITS DEFENSE RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES AND WITH NATO.

3. UNFORTUNATELY NOW, THE EPISODE OF SCHAUFELLE'S REPORTED REMARKS TO THE SFRC HAD DEALT A HARD BLOW TO THIS CLIMATE AND WHAT HE HAD BEEN TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH, CARAMANLIS SAID. WHETHER JUSTIFIED OR NOT, SCHAUFELLE HAD IN FACT BECOME NON TRATA WITH THE GREEK PEOPLE. THAT WAS THE INESCAPABLE FACT. THE PROBLEM NOW WAS WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT. SHOULD HE BE ALLOWED TO COME ANYWAY AND TAKE UP HIS MISSION? CARAMANLIS EMPHATICALLY ANSWERED HIS OWN QUESTION, "DEFINITELY NOT." IT WAS PERHAPS TOO BAD FOR SCHAUFELLE HIMSELF BUT THE INTERESTS OF INDIVIDUAL PERSONS SOMETIMES HAD TO BE SACRIFICED FOR MORE IMPORTANT PURPOSES. SHCAUFELLE COULD NEVER BE A SUCCESS IN GREECE, CARAMANLIS SAID. HE WOULD BE UNDER UNCEASING ATTACK AND CRITICISM. THE LEAST LITTLE MISSTEP HE MADE WOULD BE THROWN BACK IN THE FACE OF BOTH GOVERNMENTS. NO, HE COULD NOT COME, CARAMANLIS SAID -- IT COULD NOT BE ALLOWED. CONTINUING, CARAMANLIS SAID THE USG MUST UNDERSTAND THIS FULLY AND TAKE THE ACTION ITSELF --THUS MAKING A POSITIVEAND CONSTRUCTIVE CONTRIBUTION TO OVERALL U.S.-GREEK RELATIONS. AFTER ALL, THE PRESTIGE AND STRENGTH OF THE U.S.G. WERE NOT INVOLVED. WHATEVER MISTAKE HAD BEEN MADE HAD BEEN BY AN INDIVIDUAL. THE USG AS A GOVERNMENT WAS NOT RESPONSIBLE AND BY DISASSOCIATING ITSELF FROM THE MISTAKE COULD GIVE A VALUABLE ADDED

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IMPETUS TO THE STEADILY IMPROVING U.S.-GREEK RELATIONSHIP.

4. IN HIS OWN DIGNIFIED WAY CARAMANLIS ASKED ME TO DO MY UTMOST TO ASSURE THAT U.S. OFFICIALS WOULD NOT MISUNDERSTAND HIS POSITION AND MOTIVATION. HIS RECORD WAS CLEAR. HE HAD BEEN DOING HIS VERY BEST TO TRY AND REESTABLISH GREECE'S CLOSE AND CORDIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE U.S. THERE SHOULD BE NO MISUNDERSTANDING ABOUT THAT. AND NO ONE IN GREECE COULD HAVE DONE IT ANY BETTER AND FASTER, GIVEN THE SITUATION IN THE LATE SUMMER OF 1974. IT WAS EXTREMELY UNFORTUNATE THAT THIS EPISODE HAD OCCURRED, BUT IT HAD-- AND THE ONLY WAY TO DEAL WITHIT WAS TO DO SO PROMPTLY AND DECISIVELY, AND BE DONE WITH IT. HE VERY MUCH HOPED THAT U.S. AUTHORITIES WOULD SEE IT IN THIS LIGHT AND AGREE. BUT HE KNEW THE GREEK PEOPLE AND THE POLITICAL CLIMATE IN THIS COUNTRY AS WELL AS OR BETTER THAN ANYONE, AND IF FOR ANY REASON THE USG FAILED TO SEE THE NECESSITY OF WITHDRAWING SCHAUFELLE'S APPOINTMENT THEN HE, CARAMANLIS, AND HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO REFUSE TO ACCEPT HIM. HE THEN INDICATED HE WOULD LISTEN WHILE I SPOKE.

5. I WENT OVER IN DETAIL WITH CARAMANLIS MUCH OF THE SAME GROUND AND MAJOR POINTS I HAD COVERED YESTERDAY WITH BITSIOS.

I READ THE MOST CONTROVERSIAL SEVERAL PARAGRAPHS OF SCHAUFLE'S
SFRC TESTIMONY (HIS EXCHANGE WITH SENATOR BIDEN) FROM THE TEXT
OF THE TRANSCRIPT SENT US IN STATE 165973. I POINTED OUT
THE INNOCENCE AND INNOCUOUSNESS OF SCHAUFLE'S COMMENTS AND
STRESSED SEVERAL OF THE UPBEAT, PRO-GREEK STATEMENTS SCHAUFLE
HAD MADE. I SAID THAT THE REACTION IN GREECE TO THESE STATEMENTS
WAS OVERHELMING OUT OF PROPORTION TO WHAT WAS SAID. CARAMANLIS
INTERRUPTED TO EXPRESS DISAGREEMENT -- AND ALSO SOME SKEPTICISM
ABOUT THE DIFFERENCES IN THIS LATER TEXT FROM THE STATEMENTS
ATTRIBUTED TO SCHAUFLE IN ALEXANDRAKIS' TELEGRAM OF LAST
WEDNESDAY AND IN THE FIRST PRESS REPORTS OF THE HEARINGS.

6. I WENT ON TO MAKE WHAT I THINK WAS A POINT THAT SCORED
HEAVILY WITH CARAMANLIS. I REMINDED HIM THAT SCHAUFLE
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HAD BEEN PROPOSED IN GOOD FAITH TO BE AMBASSADOR TO GREECE AND
THAT A FEW WEEKS AGO THE CARAMANLIS GOVERNMENT HAD GIVEN ITS
AGREEMENT. WHAT HAD CHANGED SINCE THEN? THE ONLY THINGS WERE
THESE FEW REMARKS WHICH I HAD JUST READ TO HIM AND THESE RPT THESE
REMARKS WOULD BE THE OFFICIAL RECORD OF WHAT SCHAUFLE HAD
SAID. WAS THAT A PROPER BASIS FOR THE GOG NOW TO DECLARE
SCHAUFLE UNWELCOME? IT OBVIOUSLY WAS NOT. TO ANY OBJECTIVE
AMERICAN OR OTHER FOREIGN OBSERVER THE GOG WOULD APPEAR TO HAVE
CHANGED ITS MIND BECAUSE OF A PRESS AND PUBLIC REACTION IN GREECE --
A REACTION THAT WAS BEYOND THE CONTROL OR RESPONSIBILITY OF ANY
AMERICAN OFFICIAL AND WHICH WAS COMPLETELY WARRANTED BY
WHAT HAD ACTUALLY TRANSPIRED. THIS OBVIOUSLY RAISED SERIOUS
QUESTIONS ABOUT HOW OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS COULD RELATE TO ONE
ANOTHER.

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EXDIS

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY VEST FROM KUBISCH

7. CARAMANLIS SAID THAT WAS PRECISELY THE POINT. GIVEN HIS GOVERNMENT'S STRONG DESIRE TO STRENGTHEN THE U.S.-GREEK RELATIONSHIP IT WOULD BE A MISTAKE FOR BOTH GOVERNMENTS TO ALLOW THE SCHAUFLE EPISODE TO HANDICAP THEIR EFFORTS SO MUCH. WE HAD TO FACE FACTS, AND ONE LOOMING FACT WAS THE COUNTRY-WIDE INDIGNATION AND ANTI-PATHY TOWARDS SCHAUFLE IN GREECE WAS WHAT WAS INTERPRETED AS AN ANTI-GREEK STANCE. NOTHING WAS GOING TO CHANGE THAT, THEREFORE SCHAUFLE, INSTEAD OF BEING AN ASSET TO U.S.-GREEK RELATIONS, HAD BECOME A LIABILITY. IT WOULD BE FOOLHARDY FOR EITHER GOVERNMENT TO PRETEND THAT NOTHING HAD HAPPENED AND ALLOW HIM TO TAKE UP HIS POST IN GREECE. (COMMENT: EVEN AS HE MADE THESE REMARKS, I SENSED THAT CARAMANLIS REALIZED MORE FULLY THAN BEFORE THAT HE AND HIS GOVERNMENT COULD BE QUITE UNFAVORABLY REGARDED IN WASHINGTON IF THEY PROCEEDED BRUSQUELY TO DECLARE SCHAUFLE NON GRATA -- ALTHOUGH CARAMANLIS' PERSONAL POPULARITY IN GREECE MIGHT SHOOT UPWARD IF HE TOOK SUCH A STEP.)

8. I WENT ON TO REMIND CARAMANLIS OF THE WIDESPREAD UNPOPULARITY OF MY OWN GOVERNMENT-- AND ME PERSONALLY-- WHEN I FIRST ARRIVED IN GREECE IN 1974. NOW ALL THIS HAD SUBSIDED. LOCAL PRESS AND WIRE SERVICE REPORTS HAVE MADE A POINT FOR MANY

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MONTHS THAT THE GREEK PEOPLE OFTEN REACT VERY PERSONALLY TO FOREIGN OFFICIALS AND ONE RECENT AP DESPATCH SAID THAT I HAD SUCCEEDED IN "WINNING OVER" GREEK PUBLIC OPINION. SCHAUFLE COULDDO THE SAME THING. CARAMANLIS, WITHOUT ELABORATING, SAID NO, HE DID NOT AGREE.

9. I SAID I RECOGNIZED THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE PROBLEM NOW AND WAS TRYING TO HELP FIND A SOLUTION. PERHAPS THE BEST THING WOULD BE FOR THE TWO GOVERNMENTS TO REACH AN UNDERSTANDING THAT THE USG WOULD NOT INSIST ON SENDING SCHAUFLE TO GREECE IMMEDIATELY AND THE GOG WOULD NOT TAKE ANY ACTION TO PREVENT HIM FROM COMING AT SOME POINT. THE MATTER ALREADY SEEMED TO BE FALLING INTO SECOND, THIRD OR FOURTH PLACE IN THE PROMINENCE BEING GIVEN TO IT BY THE PRESS. AFTER A MONTH OR TWO THE TWO GOVERNMENTS COULD CONSULT AGAIN AND SEE WHAT THE SITUATION WAS AND WHETHER THERE WAS A SATISFACTORY PROSPECT FOR SCHAUFLE TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS TO COME TO ATHENS AND TAKE UP HIS DUTIES. IF NOT, PERHAPS THE USG COULD QUIETLY -- EXCEPT PERHAPS FOR A ONE OR TWO DAY NEWS FLARE-UP IN GREECE -- REASSIGN HIM TO ANOTHER IMPORTANT

POST ELSEWHERE AND A NEW U.S. AMBASSADOR PROPOSED FOR SERVICE IN GREECE.

10. CARAMANLIS' ADRENAL GLANDS -- WHICH SQUIRT THEIR CONTENTS INTO HIS SYSTEM AT THE SLIGHTEST PROVOCATION -- HAD BEGUN TO ACT UP. "I HAVE NOT BEEN ASKING YOU OR ANYONE ELSE TO FIND A SOLUTION," HE SAID, "I HAVE SIMPLY BEEN TRYING TO EXPLAIN TO YOU FRANKLY AS I CAN HOW I SEE THE PROBLEM AND WHAT MUST BE DONE ABOUT IT. THERE IS ONLY ONE SOLUTION -- THAT IS THAT SCHAUFELER NOT COME TO GREECE. MY MIND IS MADE UP -- THAT IS DEFINITE* I JUST WANT YOU, WHEN YOU GO BACK TO WASHINGTON, TO EXPLAIN WHY THIS HAS TO BE DONE -- AND I HOPE YOU CAN PERSUADE THE PEOPLE IN WASHINGTON TO DO THE RIGHT THING -- FROM EVERY POINT OF VIEW -- AND WITHDRAW SCHAUFELER'S NOMINATION." CARAMANLIS WENT ON TO SAY THAT THERE WAS NO
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REASON TO WAIT ONE OR TWO MONTHS TO SETTLE THE MATTER. THE PROBLEM WOULD NOT "ROT". THE THING TO DO WAS TO ACT NOW, ACT DECISIVELY, AND BE DONE WITH IT. IN THAT WAY THIS EVENT WHICH HAD TEMPORARILY REVIVED ANTI-U.S. SENTIMENTS IN THIS COUNTRY WOULD BE OUT OF THE WAY AND THE TWO GOVERNMENTS COULD CONTINUE THEIR CLOSE COOPERATION AND FURTHER PROGRESS.

11. I SAID I COULD NOT AGREE THAT HE HAD FOUND THE ONLY "SOLUTION" BUT THAT I WOULD OF COURSE REPORT HIS VIEWS FULLY AND FAITHFULLY TO WASHINGTON. I ASKED HIM IF HE REALIZED HOW UNREASONABLE HIS GOVERNMENT WAS BEING IN GIVING SUCH A NOTIFICATION IN WASHINGTON LAST SATURDAY AND THEN, IN EFFECT, THREATENING TO DECLARE THIS SENIOR U.S. AMBASSADOR NON GRATA WITH 24 - 48 HOURS UNLESS THE NOMINATION WERE WITHDRAWN. AFTER SOME FURTHER DISCUSSION CARAMANLIS AGREED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT TAKE ANY ACTION BEFORE THE USG HAD HAD A FURTHER OPPORTUNITY FOR A FEW DAYS TO CONSIDER THE MATTER AND COMMUNICATE THEIR DECISION TO THE GREEK AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON. HE SAID HE HOPED THAT THAT COULD BE DONE BY THURSDAY, JULY 21ST, BUT WOULD BE WILLING TO WAIT UNTIL FRIDAY THE 22ND IF NECESSARY. HE THOUGHT THAT SHOULD BE SUFFICIENT TIME FOR THE USG TO DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT IT INTENDED TO WITHDRAW THE SCHAUFELER NOMINATION. I EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR HIS COOPERATING AT LEAST TO THIS EXTENT AND SAID I WAS CONFIDENT THAT AN APPROPRIATE STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL COULD BE IN TOUCH WITH AMBASSADOR ALEX-ANDRAKIS, IN ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, BY FRIDAY, ALTHOUGH I OBVIOUSLY COULD NOT COMMIT MY GOVERNMENT TO HAVE MADE ANY DECISION BY THAT TIME. CARAMANLIS SIGHED RESIGNEDLY, AS THOUGH WHY, AFTER ALL HIS MANY YEARS IN PUBLIC OFFICE, DID HE HAVE TO CONTINUE TO PUT UP WITH PEOPLE WHO COULDN'T SEE THE HANDWRITING ON THE WALL AND DO WHAT HAD TO BE DONE.

12. AS I WAS LEAVING HE SAID SOME NICE THINGS ABOUT ME AND MY FAMILY PERSONALLY, HUGGED AND KISSED ME -- URGING ME ONCE AGAIN

AS HE WAS SAYING GOOD-BYE TO TRY TO GET MY GOVERNMENT TO DO THE
"RIGHT THING" WHEN I GOT TO WASHINGTON.
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13. COMMENT: MY VIEWS REMAIN AS I STATED THEM IN MY TELEGRAM
OF YESTERDAY (REF.A), UNLESS FOR SOME REASON AMBASSADOR
SCHAUFLE HIMSELF WISHES TO HAVE HIS NAME WITHDRAWN. SINCE WE
HAVE UNTIL THURSDAY OR FRIDAY -- AT LEAST -- TO GET IN TOUCH WITH
ALEXANDRAKIS AGAIN, I WILL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS THIS
MATTER FULLY AFTER RETURNING TO WASHINGTON. IN GENERAL, I
CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT DELAYING ACTION -- ON BOTH SIDES --
IS THE WISEST AND MOST DESIRABLE COURSE. HOWEVER, THIS WILL
REQUIRE THE CLOSEST POSSIBLE ATTENTION IN ORDER TO AVOID SOME
UNDESIRABLE DEVELOPMENT. I PERSONALLY FEEL, AT THIS STAGE,,
THAT THERE IS STILL A VERY, VERY TINY CHANCE THAT THE WHOLE THING
CAN BE SALVAGED AND THE SCHAUFLE APPOINTMENT TO GREECE CAN BE
MAINTAINED -- BUT IT IS ABUNDANTLY CLEAR THAT THE
ODDS NOW ARE OVERWHELMINGLY AGAINST IT.
KUBISCH

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